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Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017

Estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council

Thematic cluster II: sanctions monitoring teams, groups and panels

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

I. Introduction

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General on estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council (thematic cluster II) (A/70/348/Add.2). During its consideration of the report, the Advisory Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification, concluding with written responses received on 30 October 2015.

2. The main report of the Secretary-General (A/70/348) provides an overview of the proposed resource requirements for 2016 for 35 special political missions and related cross-cutting issues, and the five addenda to the main report cover the specific requirements for thematic clusters I to III and the two largest missions, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) (A/70/348/Add.1-5). Issues of a cross-cutting nature pertaining to all special political missions will be contained in the main report of the Advisory Committee (A/70/7/Add.10), while the budget proposals for thematic clusters I to III and UNAMA and UNAMI will be presented in its related reports (A/70/7/Add.11-15). The budget proposal of the Secretary-General for the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen

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(cluster I) is contained in a separate addendum (A/70/348/Add.6)[1] and the report of the Committee will be issued as document A/70/7/Add.16.

3. The Advisory Committee recalls that a biennial provision of $1,124.4 million for special political missions was included in section 3, Political affairs, of the Secretary-General's proposed programme budget for 2016-2017 (A/70/7, para. II.2). The comments and recommendations of the Committee on the level of the biennial provision, in particular a proposed reduction of $6 million attributed to "efficiencies" (A/70/7, para. II.3 (a)), will be included in its main report (A/70/7/Add.10), along with other cross-cutting issues relating to the proposed resource requirements, including air operations, travel and security arrangements, as well as ratios for, inter alia, vehicles and computing devices.

II. Resource requirements for 2016

4. The resource requirements proposed for 2016 for the 14 special political missions under thematic cluster II amount to $34,536,900 (net), representing a decrease of $1,400,500, compared with the resources approved for 2015. The Panel of Experts on South Sudan was a new mission established by the Security Council in its resolution 2206 (2015) of 3 March 2015. **The 14 missions comprising sanctions monitoring teams, groups and panels under the cluster will be referred to below as the missions and the panels.**

Table 1
Summary of resource requirements for 2016 for thematic cluster II
(Thousands of United States dollars)

	2014-2015			*Requirements for 2016*			
Category	*Appropriation* (1)	*Estimated expenditure* (2)	*Variance* (3)=(1)-(2)	*Total* (4)	*Non-recurrent* (5)	*Total requirements for 2015* (6)	*Variance, 2015-2016* (7)=(4)-(6)
Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea	4 871.9	4 360.6	511.3	2 265.7	–	2 406.6	(140.9)
Panel of Experts on Liberia	634.9	565.2	69.7	291.6	–	314.0	(22.4)
Group of Experts on Côte d'Ivoire	2 487.4	2 337.0	150.4	1 154.8	–	1 282.5	(127.7)
Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo	2 699.6	2 510.7	188.9	1 270.2	–	1 364.7	(94.5)
Panel of Experts on the Sudan	2 779.1	2 326.9	452.2	1 080.1	–	1 468.1	(388.0)
Panel of Experts on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea	5 433.8	4 824.3	609.5	2 599.7	–	2 729.6	(129.9)
Panel of Experts on the Islamic Republic of Iran	5 747.9	5 643.4	104.5	2 609.8	–	2 782.2	(172.4)
Panel of Experts on Libya	3 096.1	2 655.8	440.3	1 359.9	–	1 593.2	(233.3)
Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic	2 742.3	2 180.6	561.7	1 172.0	–	1 519.6	(347.6)

[1] The Secretary-General provides the explanation for the separate addendum in paragraph 10 of his report (A/70/348).

Category	2014-2015			Requirements for 2016			
	Appropriation	Estimated expenditure	Variance	Total	Non-recurrent	Total requirements for 2015	Variance, 2015-2016
	(1)	(2)	(3)=(1)-(2)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)=(4)-(6)
Panel of Experts on Yemen	4 863.3	3 871.1	992.2	3 017.3	250.0	2 609.3	408.0
Panel of Experts on South Sudan	947.5	891.3	56.2	1 428.4	–	947.5	480.9
Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1526 (2004) and the Office of the Ombudsperson established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1904 (2009)	9 000.1	8 663.2	336.9	4 420.6	–	4 496.1	(75.5)
Support to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) on the non-proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction	6 200.7	6 372.6	(171.9)	3 143.1	6.0	3 102.0	41.1
Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate	20 254.3	19 327.8	926.5	8 723.7	–	9 322.0	(598.3)
Total	**71 758.9**	**66 530.5**	**5 228.4**	**34 536.9**	**256.0**	**35 937.4**	**(1 400.5)**

5. At the end of the biennium 2014-2015, the projected total expenditures for the biennium for cluster II will amount to $66,530,500, against the appropriation of $71,758,900, leaving a projected unencumbered balance of $5,228,400, or 7 per cent. As reflected in table 1, unencumbered balances are projected for 13 missions, except for the support to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) on the non-proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction (as a result of an anticipated overrun due to actual common staff costs being higher than budgeted) (A/70/348/Add.2, para. 192). A summary of the main contributing factors to the variances for each mission is provided in table 4 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/70/348), which shows that the main common factors contributing to the projected unencumbered balance of $5,228,400 for 2014-2015 are lower actual average fees of experts and decreases in the travel of experts.

6. As shown in table 1, the overall reduction of $1,400,500 in the resources proposed for 2016 under cluster II is attributable to reduced requirements for 11 missions, offset in part by the increased requirements for 3 missions. A summary of the main contributing factors to the variances for each mission is provided in table 6 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/70/348). The increase for 2016 is mainly related to additional requirements for two missions, as shown below:

(a) Panel of Experts on South Sudan: the provision for 2016 is based on 12 months of operation, compared with the provision for 8 months for 2015 (see A/70/348/Add.2, para. 154, and para. 4 above);

(b) Panel of Experts on Yemen: the postponement to 2016 of the acquisition of two armoured vehicles and an increase in staffing costs due to the vacancy rate being lower than budgeted in 2015 (A/70/348/Add.2, para. 143).

Comments and recommendations on staffing requirements

7. Table 2 presents positions approved for 2015, the vacancy situation as at 30 September 2015 and the proposed staffing requirements for 2016 for the 14 missions under cluster II.

Table 2
Thematic cluster II: staffing requirements

	Approved for 2015	*Vacant positions as at 30 September*	*Proposed for 2016*	*New positions*	*Abolitions*	*Reclassifications*
Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea	7 (1 P-3, 1 GS (OL), 5 LL)	–	7 (1 P-3, 1 GS (OL), 5 LL)	–	–	–
Panel of Experts on Liberia	–	–	–	–	–	–
Group of Experts on Côte d'Ivoire	1 (1 P-3)	–	1 (1 P-3)	–	–	–
Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo	1 (1 P-3)	–	1 (1 P-3)	–	–	–
Panel of Experts on the Sudan	1 (1 P-3)	–	1 (1 P-3)	–	–	–
Panel of Experts on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea	4 (2 P-3, 2 GS (OL))	–	4 (2 P-3, 2 GS (OL))	–	–	–
Panel of Experts on the Islamic Republic of Iran	4 (1 P-4, 1 P-3, 2 GS (OL))	2 GS (OL)	4 (1 P-4, 1 P-3, 2 GS (OL))	–	–	–
Panel of Experts on Libya	2 (1 P-3, 1 GS (OL))	–	2 (1 P-3, 1 GS (OL))	–	–	–
Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic	2 (1 P-3, 1 GS (OL))	–	2 (1 P-3, 1 GS (OL))	–	–	–
Panel of Experts on Yemen	8 (1 P-3, 5 FS, 2 LL)	3 FS	8 (1 P-3, 5 FS, 2 LL)	–	–	–
Panel of Experts on South Sudan	3 (1 P-3, 2 GS (OL))	3 (1 P-3, 2 GS (OL))	3 (1 P-3, 2 GS (OL))	–	–	–
Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1526 (2004) concerning Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities	12 (1 P-5, 2 P-4, 3 P-3, 6 GS (OL))	1 GS (OL)	12 (1 P-5, 2 P-4, 3 P-3, 6 GS (OL))	–	–	–
Support to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) on the non-proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction	5 (1 P-5, 2 P-3, 2 GS (OL))	–	5 (1 P-5, 2 P-3, 2 GS (OL))	–	–	–
Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate	43 (1 ASG, 1 D-2, 2 D-1, 9 P-5, 13 P-4, 6 P-3, 3 P-2, 8 GS (1 PL, 7 OL))	3 (1 P-4, 1 P-3, 1 GS (OL))	43 (1 ASG, 1 D-2, 2 D-1, 9 P-5, 13 P-4, 6 P-3, 3 P-2, 8 GS (1 PL, 7 OL))	–	–	–

Abbreviations: ASG, Assistant Secretary-General; FS, Field Service; GS (OL), General Service (Other level); LL, Local level; NPO, National Professional Officer; USG, Under-Secretary-General; UNV, United Nations Volunteer.

8. As reflected in table 2, the number and grade level of the positions proposed for 2016 are the same as those approved for 2015 for the 14 missions under thematic cluster II. **The Advisory Committee recommends approval of the staffing requirements proposed by the Secretary-General for the 14 special political missions under thematic cluster II.**

Comments and recommendations on operational costs

9. The Advisory Committee was provided with information on the operational costs for cluster II, which is shown in table 3, including the appropriation and estimated expenditure for 2014-2015 and projected requirements for 2016.

Table 3
Thematic cluster II: operational costs
(Thousands of United States dollars)

	2014-2015				*Requirements for 2016*		
	Appropriations	*Estimated expenditure*	*Variance*	*Total requirements for 2015*	*Total*	*Non-recurrent*	*Variance 2015-2016*
Operational costs							
1. Experts	33 218.9	29 954.8	3 264.1	17 243.0	15 982.9	–	(1 260.1)
2. Consultants	309.9	155.5	154.4	172.7	–	–	(172.7)
3. Official travel	3 823.8	3 308.1	515.7	1 962.0	1 893.9	–	(68.1)
4. Facilities and infrastructure	6 553.4	6 088.6	464.8	2 175.5	2 122.0	–	(53.5)
5. Ground transportation	782.0	471.6	310.4	270.4	526.0	250.0	255.6
6. Communications	974.2	848.7	125.5	492.6	498.2	–	5.6
7. Information technology	1 057.9	970.3	87.6	473.0	449.6	6.0	(23.4)
8. Other supplies, services and equipment	420.1	359.6	60.5	203.3	186.7		(16.6)
Total	**47 140.2**	**42 157.2**	**4 983.0**	**22 992.5**	**21 659.3**	**256.0**	**(1 333.2)**

Experts

10. The proposed resources for 2016 under experts reflect an overall reduction of $1,260,100, compared with the resources approved for 2015, attributable to the reduced requirements of $1,242,800 for the 12 panels supported by the Department of Political Affairs and a reduction of $17,300 for support to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) on the non-proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction supported by the Office of Disarmament Affairs. The Advisory Committee was informed that for the 12 panels of experts supported by the Department of Political Affairs the proposed reduction of $1,242,800 includes: (a) a reduction in the travel of experts ($1,127,000), mainly due to decreases reflecting the pattern of expenditures of the panels and efforts to organize regional travel more efficiently; and (b) a reduction in experts' fees ($115,800), mainly due to the anticipated decrease in the average fee levels for some experts of the panels. In addition, the Committee was informed that the Department has also

reduced the provision under official travel for its staff for 2016 by $59,500 to reflect the reduced requirements for travel of experts.

11. In the case of the Monitoring Team established pursuant to Security Council resolution 1526 (2004) concerning Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities, the Advisory Committee notes from the information provided to it that the projected lower travel requirements for experts for both 2014-2015 and 2016 are due to the full application of the change in the travel standards as the contracts of experts are renewed (the change is only applied to new contracts established after the adoption of resolution 67/254 by the General Assembly). In this connection, the Committee recalls that the requirements for the travel of experts under cluster II have been partially reduced due to the change in the standards of accommodation for air travel for experts as a result of the adoption of resolution 67/254. The Committee previously noted that the contractual status of the experts serving on these panels is classified as "consultants" (see A/68/7/Add.10 and Corr.1, paras. 16 and 98-100).

12. With respect to the Panel of Experts on Liberia, it is indicated in the proposed budget that should the Security Council extend the mandate of the Panel beyond 9 October 2015, the estimated requirements for 2016 would amount to $291,600 (net), which would provide for the fees ($174,900) and official travel ($86,300) of the two members of the Panel and for other operational and logistical support requirements, such as communications, information technology equipment and maintenance and miscellaneous supplies and services ($30,400) (A/70/348/Add.2, para. 29). The Committee was informed that the Security Council decided, in its resolution 2237 (2015), adopted on 2 September 2015, to reduce the number of members of the Panel from two to one and that the estimated requirement for the Panel for 2016 is therefore to be revised from $291,600 to $170,600. **The Advisory Committee recommends a reduction of $121,000 in the proposed requirements for the Panel of Experts on Liberia for 2016.**

Consultants

13. No provision under consultants is proposed for 2016 under cluster II. The Advisory Committee was informed that efforts had been made since 2010 to gradually reduce the use of consultants engaged in support of the experts and that, as a result, the number of consultants had been reduced from nine in 2010, eight in 2011, five in 2012 and 2013, to two in both 2014 and 2015. This reflects efforts to strengthen the related roster and to recruit experts with the requisite professional and language skills. **The Advisory Committee welcomes the efforts made to reduce reliance on external consultants as well as to recruit experts with the requisite professional and language skills.**

Ground transportation

14. The proposed provision for 2016 under ground transportation represents an increase of $255,600 due to a one-time acquisition of two armoured vehicles for the protection of the Panel of Experts on Yemen. The Advisory Committee was informed that the vehicles would not be purchased during the biennium 2014-2015 due to delays in the procurement process linked with the security situation on the ground.

Other matters

Expenditures as at 31 August 2015

15. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with the expenditures by main category for thematic cluster II as at 31 August 2015, compared with the proposed resources for 2016 (see table 4). **The Advisory Committee trusts that the Secretary-General will continue to monitor the expenditure patterns and reflect changes in resource requirements in his future budget proposals**. The Committee will make further comments on the budgeting and planning assumptions for special political missions in its related cross-cutting report (A/70/7/Add.10).

Table 4
Expenditures as at 31 August 2015 for thematic cluster II

Group	*Category of expenditure*	*Total 2015*	*Actual expenditures up to 31 August 2015*	*Utilization rate (Percentage)*	*Total 2016*	*Total variance 2015-2016*
Civilian personnel	International staff	12 658.7	8 150.9	64	12 587.6	(71.1)
	National staff	224.1	75.0	33	227.9	3.8
	General temporary assistance	62.1	62.1	100	62.1	–
Total		**12 944.9**	**8 288.0**	**64**	**12 877.6**	**(67.3)**
Operational costs	Experts	17 243.0	12 467.8	72	15 982.9	(1 260.1)
	Consultants	172.7	84.0	49	–	(172.7)
	Official travel	1 962.0	919.7	47	1 893.9	(68.1)
	Facilities and infrastructure	2 175.5	358.2	16	2 122.0	(53.5)
	Ground transportation	270.4	121.3	45	526.0	255.6
	Communications	496.8	195.4	39	498.2	1.4
	Information technology	473.0	376.8	80	449.6	(23.4)
	Other supplies, services and equipment	203.3	89.4	44	186.7	(16.6)
Total		**22 996.7**	**14 612.6**	**64**	**21 659.3**	**(1 337.4)**
Grand total		**35 941.6**	**22 900.6**	**64**	**34 536.9**	**(1 404.7)**

Results-based budgeting

16. With respect to the results-based budgeting framework set out in the Secretary-General's budget report for the special political missions under cluster II, the Advisory Committee was informed that continuing efforts have been made by the Department of Political Affairs to harmonize, to the extent possible, expected accomplishments, indicators of achievements and outputs, as well as to ensure consistency in performance measures and management. The Committee was further informed that efforts will continue to be made with a review to improving the way information is presented to the General Assembly.

III. Recommendation

17. **The Secretary-General's budgetary proposals for the 35 special political missions for 2016, which require action to be taken by the General Assembly, are set out in paragraph 74 of his main report on estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the Assembly and/or the Security Council (A/70/348). The Advisory Committee recommends approval of the Secretary-General's proposal for the resource requirements for 2016 for the 14 special political missions under thematic class II, subject to the recommendation contained in paragraph 12 above, as well as the recommendations in its main report (A/70/7/Add.10).**